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UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
(Case No. MBHB00-1314)

PATENT

In the Application of)
Pieter Pouwels et al) Group Art Unit: Unassigned
U.S. National Phase of International)
Application No. PCT/EP99/04416) Examiner: Unassigned
Filed: 25 June 1999)
For: Propionibacterium Vector)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Prior to the examination of the above-identified patent application, please enter the following amendments and consider the following remarks.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36 and 38 as follows:

6. (Amended) A polynucleotide according to [any one of the preceding] claim[s] 1 which is capable of selectively hybridizing to one or more sequence(s) in SEQ ID No:1 which is (or are) necessary for autonomous replication in a *Propionibacterium*.

8. (Amended) A vector which comprises a polynucleotide according to [any one of the preceding] claim[s] 1.

10. (Amended) A vector according to claim 8 [or 9] which additionally comprises a selectable marker.

11. (Amended) A vector according to [any one of] claim[s] 8 [to 10] which is autonomously replicating in *E. coli*.